

 REPORT TO EXECUTIVE			
PORTFOLIO AREA: ENVIRONMENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT			
Date of Meeting:		1st September 2003	
Public			
Key Decision:	Yes	Recorded in Forward Plan:	Yes
Inside Policy Framework			

Title: CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

Report of: Head of Environmental Protection Services

Report reference: EPS 61/03

Summary: The report recommends that a Strategy be developed for the Council to address issues of Climate Change

Recommendations: That Members agree to the production of a Climate Change Strategy and instruct the Head of Environmental Services to commence the consultation process identified within the report with a view to producing a final Strategy for Council approval in early 2004.

Contact Officer: Richard Speirs

Ext: 7325

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2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

1. The Government's UK Climate Impacts Programme (UK CIP), in partnership with the Local Government Association and the Improvement and Development Association, has recently published guidance for local authorities on the preparation of 'Climate Change Strategies'. The UK CIP has, in addition, published a report which predicts the possible changes to

the UK's climate as a result of the continuing emissions of greenhouse gases (principally Carbon Dioxide). This report, which provides a fascinating vision of the future, can be accessed on <http://www.ukcip.org.uk/scenarios>.

2. The Government has set a target for the UK to cut its CO₂ emissions by 20% below 1990 levels by 2010. Whilst the Council is already taking action that is helping to cut greenhouse gas emissions, for example by managing its own energy consumption and promoting home energy efficiency measures, the guidance states that a Climate Change Strategy would enable authorities to develop and broaden their response to future climate change.
3. More specifically, the guidance states that the production of a Climate Change Strategy would enable an authority to:
 - i. identify the range of actions that the Council should undertake in the future in order to protect public assets from the negative effects of climate change;
 - ii. help ensure that Council services are able to cope with the climatic changes associated with the expected future changes in temperature and rainfall;
 - iii. detail the actions that local authorities have put, or will put, in place in order to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases;
 - iv. help identify how addressing climate change can assist in tackling social issues such as fuel poverty.

1.4 In addition to the above, the Government has indicated that the production of a Climate Change Strategy could help an authority to access future funding (for example: the Local Authority Carbon Management programme can provide capital funding for implementing energy saving measures in council owned buildings). Therefore, whilst it is not a statutory duty, a Climate Change Strategy could help deliver significant benefits to the Council.

1. Proposed response:

1. As a corporate strategy, the production of a Climate Change Strategy would require inputs from across the Council's business units. However, it is proposed that, if agreed, its production would be co-ordinated by the Head of Environmental Services, recognising the significance of the environmental impacts of climate change. The input from the Council's partners, most notably Eden District Council and Cumbria County Council, will need to be considered.
2. It is also proposed that the Head of Environmental Services will arrange for widespread consultation on the Strategy to be developed through the Carlisle Environment Forum and the Overview and Scrutiny process. A further report to Executive will then outline the scope of a Climate Change Strategy, and the likely time scale involved in its production.

1. CONSULTATION

1. Consultation to Date. Nil
2. Consultation proposed. Carlisle Environment Forum in early autumn with a

keynote speaker and subsequent discussions with Strategic Partners and Members of relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members agree to the production of a Climate Change Strategy and instruct the Head of Environmental Services to commence the consultation process identified within the report with a view to producing a final Strategy for Council approval in early 2004.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To enable the Council to develop a Climate Change Strategy.

3. IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources – Can be met within existing resources.
- Financial – Can be met within existing budgets.
- Legal – Whilst there is no legal requirement to produce a Climate Change Strategy its development would meet current Government guidance.
- Corporate – The recent CPA inspection highlighted the absence of an assessment of the local risks and impacts of climate change.
- Risk Management – Not included on the Council's Risk Management Register.
- Equality Issues – Nil
- Environmental – A Climate Change Strategy will enable the Council to actively identify ways in which the local impacts of Climate Change can be addressed.
- Crime and Disorder – Nil